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ABSTRACT

An exchange program between the Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) and the University of New Mexico (UNM) provided 12 interns to the APS in exchange for 7 outstanding classroom teachers to serve as clinical supervisors in the undergraduate program at UNM for a period of one academic year. The interns worked with the joint support and supervision of the school principal and the university program coordinator and took two university courses each semester. A survey on the strengths and weaknesses of the program was conducted. Principals rated the performance of interns in the categories of instruction, management, and interpersonal skills, and compared their performances with those of other first year teachers with whom they had worked. Descriptive data and weekly reflection sheets from the interns provided further information. Findings indicated that the principals felt the interns' performances compared favorably with those of other first year teachers without experience as interns. Need for greater emphasis was suggested in developing environments and authority relationships with students. Principals and interns felt the presence of an intern in the school had a significant impact on the school community and that their participation benefited the school. (JD)

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IMPACT ANALYSIS: THE EFFECT OF THE APS-UNM GRADUATE INTERN PROGRAM ON TEACHER PERFORMANCE

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Program Coordinator

Paper presented at the Rocky Mountain Educational Research Association Conference, November 11, 1982 Albuquerque, New Mexico

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Background

The APS-UNM Internship is a highly selective Graduate Teacher Training Program. For the most part, the participants have been selected from UNM's undergraduate program, on the basis of their supervisors' recommendations and grade point average. Undergraduate senior supervisors evaluate applicants on the basis of instruction, organization and management, interpersonal skills, and intrapersonal skills. The applicant's grade point average must be at least a 3.0 in order to anticipate admission to graduate study.

The program currently allows for the University to provide 12 Interns to the Albuquerque Public Schools in exchange for 7 outstanding classroom teachers who then serve as clinical supervisors in the undergraduate program at UNM. The Interns are placed in APS classrooms for a period of one academic year as fully-certified teachers with Bachelor degrees in Elementary Education. The Intern assumes full responsibility for their classrooms as would any other beginning teacher. During the year, the Intern works with the joint support and supervision of the building principal and the Intern Program Coordinator.

In addition, the Intern Teacher is required to enroll in two courses each semester. The courses are designed to help the beginning teacher explore and implement a variety of resources and instructional strategies. Course topics and activities allow the Intern to develop skill in instruction and management and to amass ideas and resources on a regular basis. The courses are

presented in a weekly seminar conducted by the Program Coordinator.

Theoretical Framework

Beginning teachers experience demands and dimensions of having their own classroom that are not encountered in the student teaching experience. The Internship allows these individuals to make the transition from working in someone else's classroom to one of their own without the typical isolation from systematic peer interaction, resource availability, sharing, and support. The theory is that the Intern Program, which provides this interaction, exposure, and support to selected beginning teachers, is going to produce teachers who are superior to those who are not as highly selected and who have not had access to the resources and support. A corollary idea is that the presence of such a beginning teacher in a school will have a positive impact on the school.

Objective

Observations and informal feedback from principals and Interns during the course of a two-year period (1980-1982) reflected competent, if not superior performance as well as a high degree of professional development on the parts of the teachers enrolled in the Graduate Intern Program. In anticipating the program planning for the following year, the desire to document the impact of the program as a source of feedback prompted a survey of principals and Interns. The survey was intended to indicate strengths and weaknesses of the program as it existed. Such feedback would then be used to strengthen program management and identify needs for focus and emphasis in the future.

Methods

Five instruments were developed to obtain information from twelve principals of Interns in the 1981-82 program, six principals of seven teachers who had been Interns in the previous (1980-81) program, and the twelve Interns in the more recent program.

The principals were asked to rate the performance of the Interns and former Interns in the categories of instruction, management, interpersonal skills and intrapersonal skills, and to compare their performance with that of other first- (or second-) year teachers with whom they had worked. * Using a similar instrument, the Interns were asked to rate the impact of the program on their personal development in the same skill areas. In addition, the 1981-82 Interns and their principals were asked to indicate their perceptions of the impact their presence had on the school community.

Informal descriptive data was obtained through weekly reflection sheets collected during the first 11 weeks of the 1982-83 program. This information was intended to provide an additional needs assessment in terms of direct supervisory response as well as program focus. The descriptive data was sought in the hopes that the Intern Teachers would be able to specify strengths and weaknesses as part of the problem solving and professional growth processes. Finally, the weekly reflections were expected to provide additional evidence of the need for a transitional support network for beginning teachers.

*Although each skill is described in greater detail on the instrument itself, there is no way to account for discrepancies in personal values and criteria among principals nor their effects on the survey results.

Note: The instruments used in collecting data for this report are available upon request from UNM, Department of Elementary Education, Intern Program Coordinator, 2043 Mesa Vista Hall, Albuquerque, NM 87131.

Results

The results of the survey assessing the performance of current and former Interns will be presented together in Table 1. The table reflects the responses on 11 of 12 surveys returned by principals of current Interns and 6 of 7 surveys returned by principals of former Interns. The numbers in each response category reflect the percentage of principals who responded with that rating for each particular item. The numbers 1 through 5 in the response categories refer to the following key:

1 = Superior 2 = Above Average 3 = Satisfactory

4 = Needs Improvement 5 = Not Satisfactory

Table 1

Intern and Former Intern Teacher Performance Evaluations

	Current Intern					Former Intern				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
INSTRUCTION										
Planning	27	64	9	0	0	67	33	0	0	0
Activities and Materials	36	45	18	0	0	67	33	0	0	0
Modeling	18	45	36	0	0	100	0	0	0	0
Delivery	9	73	18	0	0	83	17	0	0	0
Method and Focus	45	36	18	0	0	67	33	0	0	0
MANAGEMENT										
Environment	36	36	18	9	0	50	50	0	0	0
Analysis and Recording	36	27	36	0	0	50	50	0	0	0
Authority Relationship	18	45	27	9	0	83	17	0	0	0
Routine	36	36	9	9	0	83	17	0	0	0
Grouping	36	55	9	0	0	50	50	0	0	0

	Current Intern					Former Intern				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS										
Ability to work with other professionals, parents	27	64	9	0	0	67	33	0	0	0
Ability to share, ask for/offer help	18	55	18	9	0	67	33	0	0	0
Openness; Responsiveness to new ideas, suggestions	45	45	0	9	0	100	0	0	0	0
INTRAPERSONAL SKILLS										
Responsibility, initiative	45	36	18	0	0	83	17	0	0	0
Commitment to teaching, education	64	27	9	0	0	83	17	0	0	0
Commitment to personal and professional growth and development	64	27	0	9	0	67	33	0	0	0
COMPARISON TO OTHER FIRST/ SECOND YEAR TEACHERS	45	27	18	0	0	67	33	0	0	0

GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY, WOULD YOU REHIRE NEXT YEAR?

	Yes, definitely	Yes, with reservations	No
Current Interns	91	9	0
Former Interns	100	0	0

The results of the survey assessing the impact of the program on personal development as perceived by the Interns is presented in Table 2. Responses of all 12 Interns are represented in the percentages below. The numbers in each response category refer to the following key:

1 = Had a great impact; Very helpful in developing this skill/area

2 = Had some impact; Somewhat helpful in developing this skill/area

3 = Had no impact; Did not help to develop this skill/area

Table 2

Impact of Program on Personal Development

	1	2	3
INSTRUCTION			
Planning	45	58	0
Activities and Materials	83	17	0
Modeling	33	58	0
Delivery	42	58	0
Method and Focus	100	0	0
MANAGEMENT			
Environment	58	42	0
Analysis and Recording	75	25	0
Authority Relationship	67	33	0
Routine	58	42	0
Grouping	83	17	0
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS			
Ability to work with other professionals, parents	67	33	0
Ability to share, ask for/offer help	92	8	0
Openness; Responsiveness to new ideas, suggestions	92	8	0
INTRAPERSONAL SKILLS			
Responsibility, initiative	75	25	0
Commitment to teaching, education	100	0	0
Commitment to personal and professional growth and development	100	0	0

Comments on the Personal Development Impact survey included the following statement:

"I received a lot of support and ideas which I feel I would not have received had I not been in this program."

"I feel this program has helped me develop better communication shills with peers and staff."

The impact on the school community is reported in Table 3. Included are the results of the principals' evaluations and those of the Interns' evaluations. The numbers 1, 2, and 3 refer to the following key:

1 = To a Great Extent 2 = Somewhat 3 = Not at All

Table 3

Impact on the School Community

	Principal			Intern		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
. . . solicited ideas for materials, activities, management, or environment from other teachers or resource people in the school.	60	40	0	75	25	0
. . . offered to share his/her ideas for materials, activities, management, or environment with other teachers or resource people in the school.	50	50	0	67	33	0
. . . utilized the services of support staff, such as counselors, master teacher, principal, specialists.	60	40	0	92	8	0
. . . made other teachers more aware of their own programs, management systems, environments, and the materials they use in their own classrooms.	22	45	33	16	42	42
Other teachers or staff members in the school have implemented ideas for materials, activities, management, and environment that they have gotten from the Intern Teacher (either directly through sharing/requesting, or indirectly, through observation or word of mouth).	11	78	11	25	67	0

	Principal			Intern		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
. . . has contributed to the staff and school with:						
energy and enthusiasm	80	20	0	75	25	0
support and encouragement	70	30	0	83	17	0
active participation in school and social events	70	30	0	75	25	0
new ideas, activities, etc.	70	30	0	17	83	0
modeling teaching behavior	50	50	0	42	50	8

Data collected at the beginning of the 1982-83 school year reflected areas of concern and evidence of growth and improvement. The question "What was a problem/What did not go well?" demands a fairly specific response. The concerns of the first few weeks of the school year seemed to focus mainly on management, planning, and discipline. In most instances, the problems were simple and practical although other responses suggest a greater degree of stress and a need for solutions which demand major rethinking and reorganizing:

Sept. 3: When I changed workshop, I think I implemented too many changes at once, confusing the kids.

Sept. 7: Too much talking and not enough work is being done while I have reading groups. Also I need something more worthwhile for my afternoons. I'm getting bored with just books, mainly busy work. It crossed my mind several times if I'm in the right field. Just feeling down. The weekend will do me fine.

Sept. 10: Time management. I need to learn to budget my time better. I am also starting to develop problems with my independent work. It has become a pile of busy work. . .

Noise level during morning work period.

Sept. 15: Time management and planning. I still feel like I'm not teaching. I'm just going through the books.

Sept. 24: My environment doesn't accommodate all the self-selection. . .

The books weren't as popular as I'd hoped the would be. Also, the task cards weren't clear enough. . . The kindergarteners couldn't exactly relate to the song we listened to.

Now that our classroom has a routine going, I feel that it might turn into a rut.

Oct. 5: I put crayons on each table along with pencils and paper. I stressed how all pencils are "community" property and you use the ones at your table. The children immediately "stashed" pencils and new crayons in their pockets and the desks they were sitting at.

Oct. 8: Friday did not go well. The whole day was a disaster. I forgot materials for my science experiment. I forgot my lunch, and the wind blew everything off the walls.

Oct. 15: Trying to decide on appropriate grades on progress reports is more difficult that I expected.

I had problems with fitting everything I need to get done in a day. There are just so many things to do and not enough time.

I am so sick of feeling tired, letting my emotions take over, and all around stress. I feel like I work 24 hours a day without any breaks on evenings or weekends. I also feel like I haven't accomplished a whole lot.

Oct. 18: I have 10 children during the course of each day that are pulled out for special classes. They are missing a lot-- I haven't figured out how to help them make up work.

Raymond!

In most instances, these problems were approached by the Intern with the help, support, and suggestions of the Program Coordinator and other Interns in the weekly seminar discussions.

"What went well or improved. . ." and "Evidence of Growth" are also recorded weekly as a means of gaining self-awareness and reinforcing competence and confidence. These comments further describe and document the first-year experience, and, in many instances, reflect the impact of the activities and requirements of the Graduate Intern Program:

Sept. 13: My mornings are going a lot smoother because the children know what is expected of them and they are taking the responsibility. I can see when I need to change and I do so without feeling like I failed. I am also feeling more confident in the activities I choose for my students.

Sept. 15: I feel that I have finally established some sort of routine which aids in my weekly planning immensely. My legs are not as tired at the end of the day.

I feel like I've really established a support system within my school. I also feel I'm able to give consequences for behavior more effectively.

Sept. 24: The children are beginning to work more independently without my repetition of assignments. Now they observe the agenda and the board and know what to do.

. . . They don't seem to need me as much and it's great! Also, your suggestion on shortening my day's work explanation works great. The children get to work faster. . .

Sept. 29: . . . The total response of students is better. I'm getting better results because I'm getting their attention. I want to thank you for coming into my room and talking to me. It was hard for me to come to the realization that what I was doing wasn't working. . . This was hard for me after being the perfect little student for so long. I feel that you have helped nurture some positive growth in my teaching style.

Attitude. I have really stuck with it this week and I'm <u>still</u> (for now) enjoying teaching.

Oct. 1: I can really see a tremendous growth in the way our classroom functions as opposed to 6 weeks ago. I am feeling much more confident in the way I deal with "minor" crisis situations: "My tooth came out!" "He pulled my hair!" "She took my chair!"

I'm beginning to feel more at ease with my role now. I have found that I am more readily accepted as an "adult" by the kids but they seem to like me, too (that's nice!). . . I'm feeling a sense of pride in my program as opposed to the insecurity I felt a month ago!

I feel good inside. The feeling is difficult to describe. I feel as if I am part of the school now and that makes me feel more at ease.

It really helped to allow the children to choose their seating place of the day. This allowed them more decision-making skills. . .

Well, trying new strategies constantly is growth. My confidence in dealing with parents is improving. After home visits and phone calls, I realized that parents and teachers are working on the same side. Whew!

Oct. 9: I am feeling much more focused this week. I have a lot of goals that are within reach. I have quit emoting and started planning and doing.

Oct. 25: I am learning something new every day-- just by working with my children-- through successes and failures. Everything is starting to fall in place. There is a reason for everything and I can finally see that. I see the children's needs and am planning a lot from there.

Discussion

The surveys indicated, in most instances, that the principals felt that the Interns' performances compared favorably with (and, in over 50% of the total group, "superior" to) that of first- and second-year teachers without experience as an Intern. Second year teachers scored high in all four areas of instruction, management, intra- and interpersonal skills. First year teachers scored higher in instruction and intrapersonal skills than in the other two areas.

The survey suggests the need for greater emphasis on (or attention to) certain management and interpersonal skills such as developing environments and authority relaionships with students, or asking for or offering help, although in all instances, the majority of responses showed these Intern Teachers to be "Above Average" or "Superior."

The ratings for the 1980-81 Interns are interestingly higher than those of the Interns who were enrolled in the program during 1981-81. Follow-up studies will investigate if this discrepancy is more a function of the particular groups or of the second year's experience. Only one principal in either group of first- and second-year teachers indicated any reservations regarding rehiring; the principals who returned the surveys for the other seventeen

teachers stated that they would definitely rehire those teachers if given the opportunity to do so the following year.

In every instance, the Interns perceived the program to have had at least some impact on the development of each skill listed. In 81% of the skills, the majority of the students felt that the program had a great impact and was very helpful in the development of that skill.

Finally, the principals and Interns perceived the presence of an Intern in the school to have had a significant impact on the school community and that in many ways their contributions, interactions, and participation benefited the school.

Significance

Beginning teachers encounter many unfamiliar challenges when they walk into their own classrooms for the first time. Traditionally, first-year teachers face these situations more or less on their own. Utilizing resources such as the principal, other teachers or instructional supervisors, for example, may sometimes be constrained by limited resource availability, the pressure to perform competently and independently, and the amountof time needed to work into an established system to build a network of support.

Given the findings of the surveys and the descriptive data from observations and reports from Interns and principals, the significiance of a transitional stage in teacher training is evident. The Intern program provides an instant support system, access to new ideas and strategies on a regular basis, and continual opportunities for professional development through instruction, feedback and personal reflection.

Such a program not only promotes the "survival" of these highly selected beginning teachers, but also fosters professional development to such a degree

as to be evident in superior performance and positive impact on the school community.

There is no doubt as to the difficulty and demands of beginning to teach in one's own c'assroom-- the comments by the Interns attest to that. Their experiences prompt a rather compelling question: If the first few months of "on-their-own" teaching can be so difficult and draining for these teachers, who were among the most promising candidates from the undergraduate program, what is happening to those teachers who enter the field without the benefit of the support and resources of an Intern program? Ther survey results suggest a difference in performance, which may be even more profound by the end of the second year. Affective implications such as level of confidence, commitment, and stress, self-image and professional development goals suggest additional ground for research and investigation. Follow-up studies on the impact of the first-year's Internship on the Interns' own experiences as second year teachers may also be indicated. Indeed the results of these surveys may well suggest a need to consider extending and restructuring teacher training programs to include a fifth-year practicum for all candidates of the profession.